



2012 RIVER TRIP PLANNING INFORMATION

Bureau of Land Management

SAN JUAN RIVER

"Your safety is your responsibility. Travel on the San Juan River has inherent risks and river runners assume complete responsibility for their own safety."

RIVER ACCESS: There are 3 major river access points for the San Juan River. Trips launch at either Sand Island or Mexican Hat and take-out at Mexican Hat or Clay Hills. Clay Hills is the only viable take-out below Mexican Hat. There is a dangerous waterfall downstream from Clay Hills. Be prepared for a large mud bank at Clay Hills and dispersed mud bars from Slickhorn Canyon to Clay Hills during low water.

TRIP LENGTH: The Sand Island to Mexican Hat segment is about 27 miles and most boaters take 2 to 3 days to run this segment. At higher flows, the Sand Island to Mexican Hat segment may be floated in one long day. The Mexican Hat to Clay Hills segment is about 57 miles and most boaters take 4 to 5 days to run this segment. Sand Island to Clay Hills is about 84 miles and most boaters take 6 to 7 days to run this segment. Low water conditions result in slower trips which often require additional time.

SHUTTLES: Shuttles from Sand Island to Mexican Hat take 1 hour round trip. Shuttles from Sand Island and Mexican Hat to Clay Hills take 4 to 5 hours round trip. Very few shuttle services are available so plan ahead.

RIVER FLOW: The Navajo Dam in New Mexico controls San Juan flows. There is usually adequate flow for boating all year. Upstream flash floods and releases from the Navajo Dam can cause the river level to fluctuate in a short time. Be sure to tie boats securely when ashore and camp at safe areas. USGS river flow information is available at: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ut/nwis/uv?09379500>. The National Weather Service also provides a daily recorded flow summary at (801) 539-1311.

WHITEWATER: The San Juan River has class II to III rapids that require technical boating skill. Government Rapid often requires prior scouting and careful maneuvering.

NAVAJO NATION PERMITS: The left bank of the river from Montezuma Creek to Trimble Camp, and the Montezuma Creek launch point are on the Navajo Indian Reservation. Remember that you are a guest and alcoholic beverages are prohibited. **PERMITS FOR CAMPING, HIKING, AND VISITING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ARE REQUIRED.**

Permits for visiting archaeological sites (e.g. Chinle Wash) are "Class A Site Visitation Permits" issued by:

Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department

P.O. Box 4950, Window Rock, AZ 86515, (928) 871-7147

www.hpd.navajo-nsn.gov/images/hpd/crcs/permitpkg/forms/3.2_Class_A_permit_form.pdf

Camping permits and other hiking (backcountry) permits are issued by:

Navajo Parks & Recreation Department

P.O. Box 2520, Window Rock, AZ 86515, (928) 871-6647

<http://navajonationparks.org/permits.htm>

Navajo camping and backcountry permits may also be obtained at Monument Valley Park (435) 727-5870/5879; Four Corners Monument; and the Navajo Parks & Rec. office in Cameron, AZ (928) 679-2303.

PRIVATE LAND: Private land is located between the Butler Wash Petroglyph Panel (mile 4.2 below Sand Island) and River House Ruin (mile 5.9 below Sand Island), and just upriver and downriver from the Mexican Hat launch area. Please respect the rights of private landowners and do not trespass on private lands.

RECREATION FACILITIES: The Sand Island Recreation Area, located 3 miles west of Bluff, has toilets, campsites, drinking water, picnic tables, and a concrete boat ramp. Campsites are \$10 a night and are first come, first served. Only the group site may be reserved in advance for groups of 15 or more persons by calling (435) 587-1504.

Facilities at the Mexican Hat launch area include a boat launch, picnic tables, and a toilet. Vehicles have been broken into at this location, so we advise that you don't camp or leave vehicles overnight at the launch area. Vehicles may be stored at local businesses in Mexican Hat for a fee.

There is a vault toilet and aluminum recycling at the Clay Hills take-out. There is no trash dump; please pack it out.

PETS: Pets are prohibited on river trips between Sand Island and Clay Hills Crossing.

BLM AND NPS MANAGEMENT: The BLM Monticello Field Office manages the river from Montezuma Creek to the boundary of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, and in cooperation with the National Park Service, authorizes San Juan River use within the National Recreation Area.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: The County Sheriff's Department has search and rescue jurisdiction on public lands and normally takes the lead for such operations. For the San Juan River, call the **San Juan County Sheriff** at (435) 587-2237. Should illness or injury occur to a member of your river party, the following procedures are recommended:

When the injury or illness is not serious, it is usually best to continue floating downstream to a point where the person can be evacuated by vehicle.

In the event of a serious injury, such as when body movement must be constrained or a life is threatened, helicopter evacuation should be considered. In most cases, the injured party will be billed for this service. Helicopter evacuation may be initiated by contacting the following offices: **Life Flight, Grand Junction, CO**, (800) 525-4224; **Flight for Life, University of Utah Medical Center** (800) 662-0050; or **San Juan Regional Air Care** (800) 452-9990. Contact the Utah Division of Parks & Recreation to obtain an accident reporting form.

GUIDE BOOKS: River guide books can be ordered online at the Canyonlands Natural History Association website, www.cnha.org, or purchased at local area businesses and visitor centers.

OUTFITTERS, SHUTTLE PROVIDERS, & ACCOMMODATIONS: For info on these services call San Juan County Visitor Services (800) 574-4386 or (435) 587-3235 ext. 5006 or visit www.utahcanyoncountry.com.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Please visit the BLM Recreation webpage: <http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/monticello/recreation.html>